News Release
Communiqué

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Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT ENSURING HIGH QUALITY LONG-TERM CARE

Residents To Benefit From Standards Of Care And Bill Of Rights

TORONTO - The McGuinty government has passed a new law that will ensure residents receive quality care in long-term care homes across Ontario, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"Our government has enacted a significant piece of legislation that will strengthen long-term care in Ontario," Smitherman said. "This represents a major step forward as we work to ensure residents and their families can count on care that meets an appropriately high standard."

On Wednesday, the Ontario legislature passed the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007 (Bill 140). Upon proclamation, the new law will enhance the quality of life for residents of long-term care homes by strengthening enforcement and improving care and accountability. Among other things, it will include:

- The ability to establish staffing and care standards to provide the best possible care to residents;
- Whistle-blowing protections for persons, including staff, residents and volunteers, who report abuse or neglect;
- A detailed "least restraint policy" limiting the use of restraints and including appropriate safeguards;
- An enhanced and more clearly enforceable Residents' Bill of Rights;
- Strengthened requirements related to the development of an integrated, interdisciplinary plan of care for every resident.

This is just one more example of how, working together, Ontarians have achieved results in improving the quality of life for long-term care residents. Other initiatives include:

- Funding long-term care homes to hire almost 4,900 new direct care staff, including 1,101 nurses since 2004;
- Announcing an investment of $57.7 million in annual funding to create 1,200 additional positions for Registered Practical Nurses in long-term care homes across the province;
- Putting 4,912 new long-term care beds into operation since April 2004.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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Media Contacts:

David Spencer
Minister's Office
416-327-4320

David Jensen
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
416-314-6197

Members of the general public: 1-866-532-3161

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